

paragraph, the patent states that “[t]ightening the jack screws raises the extractor and shaft from the housing.” Column 2, lines 15-16. Thus, Strong unequivocally states that a tightening of the jack screws applies a releasing force to the shaft. The claimed invention recites just the opposite; the express language of claim 11 states that “a hold-down force [not a releasing force] is transmitted to the collar section by tightening the assembling screw.” (Insertion added). Nowhere in Strong is there a disclosure of a tightening of screws producing such a hold-down force. For at least this reason does Strong fail to identically teach each and every limitation in claim 11.

As for the Examiner’s assertion later on in the Office Action that no structure is recited by the claim for performing the assembling or disassembling functions, that assertion is patently false. The recited screws are the structures for performing these functions. Claim 11 recites a structure, namely the “assembling screw”, and further recites that as a result of a tightening of this screw a hold-down force is transmitted to a collar section. To believe that the assembling screw is not the structure for performing this function is to ignore the plain meaning of the claim language, since it is through this screw that the hold-down force is transmitted. Thus, contrary to the Examiner’s belief, Applicants are not claiming any and all structures for performing this function. Moreover, a belief that a particular structure is absent or inadequate for performing a particular function is no reason to willfully refuse to accord any patentable weight to language expressing such a function, since “[a]ll words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art.” In re Wilson, 165 USPQ 494, 496 (CCPA 1970).

Accordingly, unless the Examiner can point to a teaching in Strong explaining how a tightening of jack screws 36 can be viewed as producing a hold-down force in the manner recited in claim 11, Applicants submit that the rejection based on Strong should be withdrawn.

Claims 16 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Strong. Since claims 16 and 20 depend from claim 11, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons given in support of the patentability of claim 11.

Claims 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 4,970,771 to Wood ("Wood") in view of Strong. Applicants submit that these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons given in support of the patentability of claim 11. Notwithstanding the above, Applicants submit the following additional argument in support of the patentability of claim 18.

Claim 18 recites the contact section as including an axial extension that transmits the hold-down force to the fuel injector. In considering this limitation, the Examiner asserts that lips 44 meet the axial extension. Applicants disagree with this reasoning. In particular, "lips 44 are dimensioned to be received beneath the spherical ball 38 and the support structure 46 of that ball 38, as shown in Figure 8." Column 4, lines 24-26 (emphasis added). If lips 44 are beneath ball 38 and its supporting structure 46, then it stands to reason that it is incapable of transmitting a hold-down force since in order for it do so it must be located at least substantially above, not beneath, the object of the hold-down force. Accordingly, for at least this additional reason, Applicants submit that claim 18 is patentable over the combination of Wood and Strong.

If the Examiner insists on maintaining this rejection, the Examiner should specifically address these additional arguments made on behalf of claim 18.

On a further note, Applicants note that claim 17 was not rejected in view of any prior art, but was listed in the Office Action cover sheet as a rejected claim. Applicants respectfully request clarification of the status of claim 17 in the next communication from the Patent Office.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Dated: 3/11/03

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